

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22 are pending in this Application.

Claims 1, 9, and 17 are currently amended. Applicants submit that support for the claim amendments can be found throughout the specification and the drawings.

Claims 1-22 remain pending in the Application after entry of this Amendment. No new matter has been entered.

In the Office Action, claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,796,489 to Slater et al. (hereinafter “Slater”), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,807,633 to Pavlik (hereinafter “Pavlik”).

Claims Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections to claims 1, 9, and 17 and request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph based on. The Office Action alleges that “the Examiner can find no evidence in the Specification or the Drawings that link any specific user input to with a specific action as detailed in the independent claims 1, 9, and 17.” Applicants respectfully disagree.

The Office Action points to the example of “third user input to generate a map.” Claim 1 as originally recited in the specification states “allowing a user to generate a map that maps data...” FIG. 4 illustrates process 60 entitled “defined event metadata” which includes step 64 of “create XML Map to be used by XML Gateway.” (emphasis added). Paragraph [0056] of the Specification indicates that system 10 is typically set up by one or more users. System 10 includes a user interface 32. Paragraph [0056] also indicates that FIG. 4 is a flowchart depicting various steps involved with setting up system 10. Paragraph [0063] indicates that in step 64 of FIG. 4, the defined DTD 42 is used to map data, including data stored in database tables. Thus, Applicants disagree that the Examiner cannot find any evidence in the Specification to support the recited claims. Furthermore, the figures (e.g., FIGS. 13, 14, and 17-21) are clear examples of user interfaces for receiving user input corresponding to specified actions.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S. C. § 103(a)

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections to claims 1-22 and request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Slater in view of Pavlik. The Office Action alleges that the combination of references teach or disclose all of the claimed limitations of the corresponding claims and that one having ordinary skill in that art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to incorporate the teachings of Slater with the teachings of Pavlik.

Applicants, however, respectfully submit that a prima facie case of obviousness has not been established by the evidence presented in the Office Action. In order to establish a prima facie showing of obviousness, three requirements must be satisfied: all limitations of a pending claim must be expressly or impliedly disclosed by prior art references; there must be a suggestion or motivation in the art for the ordinarily skilled artisan to combine the limitations; and there must be a reasonable expectation of success in making such a combination. (M.P.E.P. § 2143).

Applicants respectfully submit that Slater and Pavlik, either individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest one or more of the claim limitations recited in each of claims 1-22.

Claim 1

Amended claim 1 recites a computer-implemented method of associating an electronic signature with an electronic record in a computer system, the method comprising:

receiving first information from a user interface defining an event that, upon occurrence, generates an electronic record that requires an electronic signature from data intercepted from a database transaction; (e.g., see FIG. 3, element 20a business event setup)

receiving second information from a user interface defining one or more fields stored in the electronic record; (e.g., see FIG. 3, element 20b eRecord Content setup)

receiving third information from a user interface that maps data from underlying database tables to at least some of the fields defined for the electronic record; (e.g., see FIG. 3, element 20b eRecord Content setup)

receiving fourth information from the user interface defining a layout for displaying data in the electronic record on a computer display when an electronic signature for the electronic record is collected; (e.g., see FIG. 3, element 20b eRecord Content setup)

receiving fifth information from the user interface identifying a signatory approver for the electronic record; (e.g., see FIG. 3, element 20c eSignature Rule setup)

in response to the occurrence of the event, generating the electronic record from data intercepted from the database transaction and displaying the electronic record to the signatory approver according to the defined layout; (e.g., see FIG. 3, elements 36 and 22 of ERES processing)

receiving an electronic signature from the signatory approver; and
generating sixth information associating the electronic signature with the electronic record prior to committing the database transaction to a database.

Applicants respectfully submit that Slater and Pavlik, either individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation recited in claim 1.

For example, the combination of Slater and Pavlik fails to teach or suggest the feature recited in amended claim 1 of “receiving first information from a user interface defining an event that, upon occurrence, generates an electronic record that requires an electronic signature from data intercepted from a database transaction.” The Office Action alleges that Slater discloses the above feature in Col. 7, lines 6-15 in that a document is prepared that requires one or more digital signatures. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Slater states in the identified section that “FIG. 2A is a block diagram that illustrates the preparation, transmission, and processing of an electronic document that has at least one embedded digital signature. The electronic document is first prepared (250) such that the document may become a binding and legally enforceable document. Preparing the electronic document may include entering data or content into a template (251). Alternatively, a template is

not necessary to prepare or create the electronic document and the electronic document can be created without a template.” However, the creation process of the electronic document in Slater to make a binding and legally enforceable document, 1) does not teach or suggest receiving first information as recited in claim 1 that defines an event which upon occurrence creates an electronic document or 2) does not teach or suggest the an electronic record is generated from data intercepted from a database transaction.

On page 2, the Office Action directs the Applicants to Col. 4, lines 1-25 and states that the land transaction of Slater is an example of an event defined by the electronic document of Slater that requires at least one digital signature. It appears the Office Action is thus alleging that the user in Slater when creating the electronic document to make a binding and legally enforceable document is defining an event (e.g., the land transaction) by the contents of the electronic document. However, Slater discloses in Col. 7, lines 6-15 that the electronic document is first prepared such that the document may become a binding and legally enforcing document. Thus, the alleged event of the legal transaction does not occur (e.g., become binding and legally enforcing) until after creation of the electronic document [create document → defines event of legal transaction]. In contrast, amended claim 1 recites that the event occurs before creation of the electronic record as occurrence of the event creates the electronic document [occurrence of event → create electronic record].

Applicants further submit that the electronic document of Slater does not define an event that upon occurrence generates an electronic record from data intercepted from a database transaction.

Moreover, on page 4, the Office Action states that “it is not the content of the document of Slater that is the event; it is the recording of the legal transaction that generates the document requiring signatures that is the event.” The Office Action now changes position and indicates that the content of the electronic document does not define the event of the land transaction, but that recording the electronic document is the alleged event. However, the Office Action fails to provide any evidence or point to any teaching in Slater and Pavlik where the alleged event of the recording of the legal transaction in Slater is defined by receiving first

information from a user interface to define the event as recited in claim 1. Slater and Palvik both fail to teach or suggest the recording event of Slater is defined by received information such that, upon occurrence, an electronic record is generated that requires an electronic signature as recited in amended claim 1 from data intercepted from a database transaction.

Finally, to support its rejection of claim 1, the Office Action alleges that Slater discloses the feature recited in claim 1 of “in response to the occurrence of the event, generating the electronic record and displaying the electronic record to the signatory approver according to the defined layout” by pointing to the electronic document of Slater created in Col. 7, lines 5-14. This is the same document or information the Office Action identified as defining the event on page 2. The first information and the electronic record are distinctly recited in claim 1, and thus the same electronic document in Slater fails to teach or suggest both as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, Slater does not teach or suggest that an electronic record is generated from data intercepted from the database transaction as recited in amended claim 1 and displayed in response to the recording of the land transaction.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Slater and Pavlik fail to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation recited in amended claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2-22

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 9 and 17 are allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed above for the allowability of claim 1, and others. Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-8, 10-16, and 18-22 that depend directly and/or indirectly from the independent claims 1, 9, and 17 respectively, are also allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed above for the allowability of the independent claims. Applicants further respectfully submit that the dependent claims recite additional features that make the dependent claims allowable for additional reasons.

Unless otherwise specified, amendments to the claims are made for the purposes of clarity, and are not intended to alter the scope of the claims or limit any equivalents thereof.

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Amdt. dated April 21, 2008
Reply to Office Action of November 20, 2007

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While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the prior art rejections set forth in the Office Action, these amendments may be made to expedite issuance of the allowable subject matter. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims to subject matter similar to those pending before the present Amendment in co-pending or subsequent applications.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,

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